

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 031410

O 131015Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 1954

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MANAMA 312

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS : MARR, BA, US

SUBJECT : MIDDLE EAST FORCE REASSURANCES REGARDING  
FORCE ROLE

REFERENCE : (A) MANAMA 256

(B) STATE 46687

1. IN MARCH 12 MEETING, FOREIGN MINISTER INFORMED ME GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN HAD CAREFULLY REVIEWED OUR PROPOSED LETTER OF REASSURANCES AND HAD RECONFIRMED ITS DECISION THAT OUR LETTER FALLS SHORT IN AN ESSENTIAL RESPECT OF MEETING GOB'S NEED TO "LIVE AT PEACE WITH ITS NEIGHBORS" WHILE MAINTAINING THE SORT OF HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S. NAVY PRESENCE IT ANTICIPATES IN FUTURE. HENCE, GOB IS REQUESTING WE ADD FOLLOWING SENTENCE, PRESUMABLY AT END OF KEY THIRD PARAGRAPH OF LETTER AS AMENDED (REFTELS): QTE THE FACILITIES EXTENDED BY THE BAHRAIN GOVERNMENT TO THE UNITED STATES MIDDLE EAST FORCE WILL NOT BE UTILISED IN ANY MANNER TO ASSIST OR SUPPORT DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY ANY MILITARY ACTION OR OPERATION AGAINST NEIGHBORING STATES IN THE GULF AREA. UNQTE

2. I REMINDED FOREIGN MINISTER THAT MY INSTRUCTIONS ARE TO URGE GOB TO ACCEPT OUR LETTER AS IT STANDS. HE SAID GOVERNMENT CLEARLY UNDERSTANDS THIS, HAS CONSIDERED OUR REQUEST AND MUST "IN FRIENDSHIP" URGE THAT WE ADD SUBSTANCE OF THIS ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE.

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3. I POINTED OUT GOB LANGUAGE PLACED A RESTRICTION (ALBEIT A PURELY HYPOTHETICAL ONE IN VIEW HISTORY AND MISSION OF MIDDLE EAST FORCE) ON THE USE OF THE FACILITIES, NOT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE FORCE ITSELF. COULD I POINT OUT THIS DISTINCTION IN CONVEYING GOB REQUEST TO WASHINGTON? FOREIGN MINISTER URGED THAT I DO SO, NOTING LANGUAGE HAD BEEN CAREFULLY DRAFTED WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT GOB CANNOT CONTROL, IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR, AND WOULD NOT PRESUME TO TRY TO DICTATE USES U.S. NAVY MIGHT MAKE OF MIDDLE EAST FORCE. ALL GOB SEEKS, AND FEELS IT MUST HAVE TO PERMIT CONTINUED NAVY PRESENCE IN CIRCUMSTANCES SUPPORTIVE OF, RATHER THAN DISRUPTIVE TO, GULF STABILITY IS ASSURANCE THAT BAHRAIN FACILITIES THEMSELVES WILL NOT BE INVOLVED IN ASSISTING OR SUPPORTING ACTION AGAINST NEIGHBORING STATES. FOREIGN MINISTER NOTED SEVERAL TIMES IMPORTANCE AND URGENCY GOB ATTACHES TO THIS REQUEST, AND SPIRIT OF GOOD RELATIONS IN WHICH IT IS MADE.

4. COMMENT: (A) I HAVE REVIEWED THIS GOB REQUEST WITH COMMANDER MIDDLE EAST FORCE. NEITHER HE NOR I FEEL THAT IN MEETING IT WE WOULD BE MAKING ANY COMMITMENT OR SURRENDERING ANY FLEXIBILITY BEYOND THE PRACTICAL REALITIES OF THE PRESENT MIDDLE EAST FORCE SITUATION. WHAT GOB IN FACT IS SAYING IS "IN ORDER FOR YOUR NAVY TO STAY HERE COMFORTABLY, TELL US IT WILL NOT DO THAT WHICH WOULD, WITH OR WITHOUT YOUR REASSURANCES, FORCE US TO THROW IT OUT IMMEDIATELY ANYWAY." IN SHORT, WHAT HAVE WE GOT TO LOSE?

(B) MARCH 8 I HAD OPPORTUNITY TO TALK WITH LEGAL MINISTER AL-BAHARNA PRIOR TO CABINET MEETING AT WHICH I BELIEVE OUR REASSURANCE POSITION WAS REVIEWED. I POINTED OUT CAREFULLY THAT WE WERE NOT SEEKING ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE FROM GOB BUT WERE RATHER URGING MOST STRONGLY THAT GOB ACCEPT OUR REASSURANCES AS THEY STAND. I WENT OVER POINTS I HAD EARLIER COVERED WITH FOREIGN MINISTER (MANAMA 256) AND BAHARNA FULLY UNDERSTOOD OUR POSITION. ON MARCH 10 AND 11, PRESUMABLY AFTER CABINET DECISION WAS MADE, I MADE "COURTESY CALLS" ON AMIR AND PRIME MINISTER RESPECTIVELY IN WHICH LENGTHY, FRANK SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS GAVE THEM AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE PROBLEM REASSURANCE LANGUAGE. THEY DID NOT, NOR DID I. POINT IS: I AM NOW CONVINCED THAT BOTH

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PRIME MINISTER AND AMIR FULLY UNDERSTAND AND HAVE CONSIDERED CAREFULLY OUR POSITION AS GIVEN IN MY APPROACH TO FOREIGN MINISTER AND HAVE APPROVED (IF NOT INSTIGATED) REQUEST REPORTED ABOVE. IN SUM, WE HAVE HAD A FULL HEARING BY BAHRAIN'S LEADERSHIP; HENCE, ATTEMPT TO PRESS OUR CASE FORMALLY WITH EITHER AMIR OR PRIME MINISTER WOULD BE SUBSTANTIVELY REPETITIVE AND COULD WELL BE ILL RECEIVED AS MATTER OF FORM.

(C) IN RECENT CALLS WITH ADMIRALS HANKS AND BIGLEY, AND IN MY OTHER RECENT CONTACTS WITH GOB, I HAVE BEEN STRUCK BY INTENSITY AND SINCERITY WITH WHICH AMIR, PRIME MINISTER, FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER CABINET OFFICERS HAVE EXPRESSED (1) THEIR PLEASURE AT CONTINUED MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE AND HOPE THAT POLITICAL SITUATION IN AREA WILL PERMIT IT TO REMAIN IN FRIENDLIEST, MOST COOPERATIVE OF CIRCUMSTANCES; AND (2) THEIR GRATIFICATION AT PRESENT EXCELLENT STATE OF US-BAHRAINI RELATIONS AND STRONG DESIRE, DESPITE THEIR PESSIMISTIC ASSESSMENT PRESENT PROSPECTS U.S. PEACE EFFORT, TO SEE THIS RELATIONSHIP EXPAND TO MUTUAL BENEFIT BOTH COUNTRIES. IN LIGHT THESE DISCUSSIONS, WE APPEAR TO HAVE COME TO END OF MIDDLE EAST FORCE NEGOTIATIONS IN AN ATMOSPHERE PROMISING FOR OVERALL US-BAHRAINI RELATIONS TO FIND ONE OBSTACLE, FROM THIS PERSPECTIVE MINOR AND ESSENTIALLY SEMANTIC, BEFORE US. I THINK WE SHOULD HURDLE IT BY ACCEPTING GOB REQUEST AND

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W  
----- 030385

O 131015Z MAR 75  
FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1955

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MANAMA 0312

EXDIS

GET ON WITH THE FUTURE. END COMMENT.

4. RECOMMENDATION: THAT WE STOP STRAINING ON WHAT LOOKS FROM HERE TO BE A GNAT AND ACCEPT THE GOB'S SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN ORDER TO CONCLUDE THIS LONG NEGOTIATION SUCCESSFULLY WHILE THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION STILL PERMITS THE GOB TO DO SO.

5. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO PASS THIS MESSAGE TO SECDEF, CNO, JCS, CINCUSNAVEUR AND COMIDEASTFOR.  
TWINAM

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## Message Attributes

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